

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA TOURISM  
COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT DISTRICT**

**AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES ENGAGEMENT**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**



## **INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES**

Board of Directors  
Branson/Lakes Area Tourism  
Community Enhancement District  
Branson, Missouri

We have performed the procedures enumerated below, which were agreed to by Branson/Lakes Area Tourism Community Enhancement District (The District) of Branson, Missouri, solely to assist you with evaluating compliance with your contract for tourism marketing services (the Contract) with the Branson/Lakes Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau (the CVB), for the year ended December 31, 2016. The District's management is responsible for compliance with the tourism marketing services contract. The sufficiency of these procedures is solely the responsibility of those parties specified in the report. Consequently, we make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures described below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

Our procedures and findings are as follows:

- Procedure* – Verify consistency of calculation methods and measures used compared with prior years.  
*Finding* – The CVB utilizes Smith Travel to obtain visitation and spending statistics; this is consistent with prior years. Procedure completed without exception.
- Procedure* – Obtain a CVB list of resources used to fulfill visitor inquiries.  
*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.
- Procedure* – Obtain listing of contracts between the CVB and advertisers in its Vacation Guide and on its websites. Representatively select 25 Vacation Guide and 10 website contracts. Ensure that each vendor advertisement appears in the Vacation Guide per the contract. Confirm that advertising policies and procedures exist. Report any differences.  
*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

4. *Procedure* – Obtain quarterly marketing reports.

- a) Note date of quarterly marketing reports on *Attachment A* to demonstrate timeliness.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- b) Trace data reported in quarterly marketing reports for “results of measurable objectives” to research and other sources to confirm accuracy of reported:

1. Visitation trends
2. Visitor spending
3. Tax receipts
4. Website visits
5. Marketing Opportunity Fund recap sheet information

*Finding* – City of Branson sales tax and tourism tax percentage increases were not properly reported in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter marketing reports as follows:

	<u>% Reported</u>	<u>Correct %</u>
1st Quarter		
Branson Sales Tax	12.4%	6.7%
Branson Tourism Tax	19.0%	14.1%
4th Quarter		
Branson Sales Tax	3.1%	4.7%
Branson Tourism Tax	7.1%	9.4%

*District Response* – The District has learned that due to human error, the wrong percentages were picked up and overlooked during the review process – the first time this has happened.

5. *Procedure* – Obtain a copy of the Vacation Guide and confirm that the following legend is included in the publication: “*Made possible with funds provided by the Branson/Lakes Area Tourism District.*”

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

6. *Procedure* – For media payments billed in months specified on *Attachment A*, verify CVB receipts of related tear sheets or publication/broadcast affidavits (or electronic equivalents).

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

7. *Procedure* – Review all copyrights and logos to ensure they are registered in the District’s name. Provide dates related paperwork was submitted to the District on *Attachment A*.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

8. *Procedure* – Verify that the CVB accounting books and records are segregated from those of other Chamber entities by obtaining a copy of the CVB segregated income statement, trial balance and chart of accounts for the year ended December 31, 2016. Confirm with CVB management that these do not contain any Chamber-related activity or accounts.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

9. *Procedure* – Provide the CVB audit completion date on *Attachment A* and attach copy if available.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

10. *Procedure* – Report any restrictions to records access by either party in findings.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

11. *Procedure* – Obtain Missouri Division of Tourism grant letters and related documents to verify total grants available. Compare actual amounts received and transmitted to the District to amounts available. Report any differences.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

12. *Procedure* – Obtain financial reports from the District and the CVB.

- a) Obtain and review revenue sources reported on the CVB’s Enhancement Tax Group (“ET”) financial statements. Compare to revenue received from the CVB on the District’s financial statements and report on any differences.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- b) Compare Accounts Receivable from the District on the CVB books to Accounts Payable to the CVB on District books and report any differences. Obtain reconciliations from the District when different and include them in report.

*Finding* – The Accounts Receivable from the District on the CVB books was reported as \$253,628.15 and Accounts Payable on the District’s books was reported as \$255,705.78, which is a difference of \$2,077.63 or 0.8%.

- c) Obtain the CVB’s final ET Marketing Budget and trace to the final budget approved by the District. Compare to the District’s final budget. ET budget lines should equal the District’s budget lines. Report on any differences.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- d) Compare ET consolidated financial statement trial balance actual totals to those in the annual audited financial statements. Report on any differences.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- e) Compare ET consolidated financial statement trial balance actual totals to the District's actual financial statements for the same period. Report on any differences.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- f) Inspect all invoices to the District for the months specified on *Attachment A* and verify that the CVB payments were made pursuant to Sections 5.7 and 5.8, as follows:

- 1) Services were contracted for or provided before the reimbursement request to the District, except for multi-year contract vendor payments and staff professional dues.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- 2) No advance payments were made by the CVB except for Marketing Fund expenses, as previously approved by the District Treasurer. Verify that invoices were not reimbursements for required prepayments to subcontractors by review of subcontractor payment schedule and invoices.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- 3) District denial of invoices was accompanied by written documentation (including electronic) within 15 days of receipt, stating the reasons for such denial and remedies available to cure, if any.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- 4) Invoices were posted to the approval code classification and that classification is consistent with generally accepted accounting principles and the CVB budget line item descriptions.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

13. Obtain and read the insurance policy for the year to verify minimum coverage amounts. Provide date and term of current insurance coverage on *Attachment A*.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

14. Confirm existence of signed Conflict of Interest policies to verify that officers and employees act independently with vendors and are restricted from acting in their own personal interests or for their own gain by reason of their employment with the CVB.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

15. Obtain Marketing Plan

- a) Obtain Marketing Plan for the year and attach as a supplemental schedule.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

- b) Provide dates of District Marketing Council's approval of the original Marketing Plan and all amendments or adjustments on *Attachment A*.

*Finding* – Procedure completed without exception.

This agreed-upon procedures engagement was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. We were not engaged to, and did not conduct an audit, examination, or review, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion, on the compliance with the tourism marketing services contract. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Branson/Lakes Area Tourism Community Enhancement District, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than those specified parties.

KPM CPAs, PC

KPM CPAs, PC  
June 20, 2017

## **SUPPLEMENTAL**

## Attachment A

Documentation for Selected Months: March, August, November

### Quarterly Marketing Reports

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2016	5/12/2016
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2016	9/22/2016
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2016	11/17/2016
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2016	2/23/2017

Date(s) of copyright/logo registration in District name and date(s) documentation delivered to District	5/24/2016
--	-----------

CVB audit completion date	6/23/2017
---------------------------	-----------

Current Certificate of Liability Insurance	8/1/2016 – 8/1/2017
--	---------------------

### District Marketing Council (DMC) approvals of 2016

Marketing Plan and each amendment or adjustment DMC Plan Adjustment Approval(s)	9/9/2015 N/A
--	-----------------



THE WHITLOCK CO.

*CPAs and Consultants*

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
AND AFFILIATE**

---

**COMBINED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
with  
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

**YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015**

---



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Board of Directors  
Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Affiliate  
Branson, Missouri

### **Report on the Combined Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying combined financial statements of **Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Affiliate**, which comprise the combined statements of financial position as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and the related combined statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the combined financial statements.

### **Management's Responsibility for the Combined Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these combined financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of combined financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### **Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these combined financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the combined financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the combined financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the combined financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the combined financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the combined financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

## Opinion

In our opinion, the combined financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the combined financial position of **Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Affiliate**, as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and the changes in their net assets and their cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

## Other Matter

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the combined financial statements as a whole. The accompanying supplementary schedules and combining financial statements are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not required parts of the combined financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management, and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the combined financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the combined financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the combined financial statements, or to the combined financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the combined financial statements as a whole.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "THE WHITLOCK CO., LP". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Springfield, Missouri  
June 23, 2017

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

ASSETS

	<u>December 31,</u>	
	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,717,546	\$ 1,893,350
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$15,000 in 2016 and 2015	439,499	650,530
Certificates of deposit	139,249	271,388
Prepaid expense	<u>22,740</u>	<u>22,082</u>
	<u>2,319,034</u>	<u>2,837,350</u>
 <b>Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation</b>	 <u>1,322,228</u>	 <u>835,220</u>
 <b>Non-current asset</b>		
Other	<u>3,455</u>	<u>3,455</u>
	<u>3,455</u>	<u>3,455</u>
	 <u>\$ 3,644,717</u>	 <u>\$ 3,676,025</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 311,388	\$ 567,243
Accrued payroll	90,565	75,825
Deferred revenue	569,927	503,101
Other accrued expenses	<u>-</u>	<u>19,181</u>
	<u>971,880</u>	<u>1,165,350</u>
 <b>Net assets</b>		
Unrestricted	1,936,930	1,777,207
Board designated reserve	610,907	608,468
Board designated airport risk mitigation	<u>125,000</u>	<u>125,000</u>
	<u>2,672,837</u>	<u>2,510,675</u>
	 <u>\$ 3,644,717</u>	 <u>\$ 3,676,025</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the combined financial statements.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**

	<u>Years ended December 31,</u>	
	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Support and revenues</b>		
Chamber dues and fees	\$ 874,656	\$ 819,337
Tax funded CVB	10,568,891	11,521,464
Chamber funded CVB	35,182	79,606
Taney County Partnership	267,201	244,882
Interest income	2,737	2,527
Gain on sale of asset	<u>-</u>	<u>5,183</u>
	<u>11,748,667</u>	<u>12,672,999</u>
 <b>Expenses</b>		
Program services and supporting activities:		
Chamber	818,327	759,818
Tax funded CVB	10,415,308	11,407,780
Chamber funded CVB	81,409	120,974
Taney County Partnership	<u>271,461</u>	<u>244,881</u>
	<u>11,586,505</u>	<u>12,533,453</u>
 <b>Increase in net assets</b>	 162,162	 139,546
 Net assets at beginning of year	 <u>2,510,675</u>	 <u>2,371,129</u>
 Net assets at end of year	 <u><u>\$ 2,672,837</u></u>	 <u><u>\$ 2,510,675</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the combined financial statements.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**

	<u>Years ended December 31,</u>	
	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Membership dues received from members	\$ 802,844	\$ 721,098
Marketing support and fees received	755,385	437,124
Cash received from City of Branson tourism tax	2,167,960	2,960,110
Cash received from Tourism Community Enhancement District	7,144,458	7,405,750
Cash received from special projects	1,152,945	1,186,572
Cash paid for marketing and operations	(11,790,524)	(12,590,797)
Interest received	2,822	2,527
	<u>235,890</u>	<u>122,384</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Acquisition of property and equipment	(543,833)	(72,581)
Proceeds received on the sale of assets	-	12,000
Net change in certificates of deposits	132,139	50,940
	<u>(411,694)</u>	<u>(9,641)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		
<b>Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	(175,804)	112,743
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>1,893,350</u>	<u>1,780,607</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	<u>\$ 1,717,546</u>	<u>\$ 1,893,350</u>

(continued)

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**

(continued)

	<u>Years ended December 31,</u>	
	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Reconciliation of increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities</b>		
Increase in net assets	\$ 162,162	\$ 139,546
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	56,825	62,532
Gain on sale of assets	-	(5,183)
Bad debt expense	110	1,045
Decrease (increase) in:		
Accounts receivable	210,921	44,007
Inventories	-	1,025
Prepaid expenses	(658)	(2,846)
Other assets	-	1,551
Increase (decrease) in:		
Accounts payable	(255,855)	(132,076)
Accrued payroll	14,740	10,501
Deferred revenue	66,826	1,358
Other accrued expenses	<u>(19,181)</u>	<u>924</u>
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b><u>\$ 235,890</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 122,384</u></b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the combined financial statements

# BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE

## NOTES TO COMBINED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2015

### 1. Summary of significant accounting policies

This summary of significant accounting policies is presented to assist in understanding the **Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Affiliate's** (the Chamber) combined financial statements. The combined financial statements and notes are representations of the Chamber's management, which is responsible for their integrity and objectivity. In preparing combined financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles, management makes estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the combined financial statements, as well as the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

#### Nature of operations

The Chamber is organized to promote the general welfare and prosperity of Branson and the Lakes area, and to market the Lakes area for the Branson/Lakes Area Tourism Community Enhancement District (the District) and the City of Branson. Programs provided by the Chamber include publishing of periodicals and distribution of information about local businesses as well as operating a visitor center to provide information to tourists. The Convention and Visitor's Bureau, a division of the Chamber, is under contract with the District to provide a destination marketing program for the District in exchange for the 1% tax generated by the District, less a District administrative fee and additional reserve as determined by the District. The Chamber is also under contract with the City of Branson to provide tourism marketing and promotional services in exchange for 25% of the City's monthly tourism tax collections, less cost of collections and 2% contingency.

#### Explore Branson Tourism – The Affiliate

On November 1, 2016, **Explore Branson Tourism** (the Affiliate) entered into a management and operational service agreement with the Chamber to administer the Branson/Lakes Area Tourism Community Enhancement District contract. The Affiliate provides management over the expenditures of tax funds and the corresponding receipt of funds from the District.

#### Principles of Combination

The **Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce**, in accordance with the provisions of *American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Statement of Position 94-3*, includes the Affiliate in the combined financial statements in which they have economic interest arising from a contractual relationship. All material inter-organization transactions have been eliminated.

#### Cash and cash equivalents

For purposes of the statement of cash flows, the Chamber considers all highly liquid debt instruments purchased with a maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

### Investments

Investments, which consists of certificates of deposits, totaled \$139,250 and \$271,388 at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively. The certificates bear interest ranging from .30% to 1.05%, as of December 31, 2016, and have maturities ranging from twelve to twenty-four months, with penalties for early withdrawal. Any penalties for early withdrawal would not have a material effect on the combined financial statements.

### Property and equipment

Property and equipment are carried at cost. Depreciation of building and improvements is computed by the straight-line and accelerated methods over useful lives of 20 to 39 years. Furniture, equipment, and vehicles are depreciated by the straight-line method over useful lives of 5 to 10 years. Amortization of assets acquired under capital lease agreements is included in depreciation expense.

### Net assets

The Chamber's net assets are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted, depending on the existence of donor restrictions. The Chamber's unrestricted net assets are available at the discretion of the Board for use in the Chamber's activities.

Funds that the Board of Directors have designated as reserves are for specific future use as set forth in the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce Restricted Reserve Fund Policy and are reported as board-designated reserve.

Funds that the Board of Directors have designated as airport risk mitigation are for specific use of attracting and supporting airlines to serve Branson Airport. The Chamber has reserved \$125,000 for this purpose including \$25,000 allocated from the Taney County Partnership (TCP).

### Credit risk

The Chamber grants credit in connection with programs and memberships to their members, substantially all of whom are from the Branson, Missouri area.

### Revenue recognition

Advertising revenue and special event revenues, including the City of Branson tourism tax and Community Enhancement District tax receipts, are recognized as revenue when earned. Membership dues are recognized as revenue over the time period to which the dues relate.

### Donated services

No amounts have been reflected in the combined financial statements for donated services, as there is no objective basis available to measure the value of such services.

### Income taxes

Under provisions of the Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(6), and similar state statutes, the Chamber are exempt from taxes on income other than unrelated business income. For the years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015, the Chamber had no taxable income as a result of their unrelated

business activities and has approximately \$1,050,000 of net operating losses to offset future taxable income.

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles prescribe a recognition threshold and measurement attribute for financial statement recognition, and measurement of a tax position taken or expected to be taken in a tax return, and also provides guidance on various related matters such as the position the Chamber has taken that the organization are exempt from income taxes.

The Chamber's income tax filings are subject to audit by various taxing authorities. The Chamber's open tax audit periods are 2013 through 2016. In evaluating the Chamber's tax positions, interpretations and tax planning strategies are considered. The Chamber believes their estimates are appropriate based on current facts and circumstances.

#### Advertising costs

Advertising costs are expensed as incurred. Advertising expense totaled \$9,085,582 for 2016 and \$7,256,849 for 2015.

#### Recent accounting pronouncements

In February 2016, the FASB issued *ASU 2016-02 Leases*. *ASU 2016-02* requires recognition of the assets and liabilities that arise from leases. The new standard is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019. The Chamber is currently evaluating the effect that implementation of the new standard will have on its combined financial statements.

The FASB issued *ASU 2016-13, Measurement of Credit Losses on Financial Instruments*, in June 2016. Its implementation will result in a new Accounts Receivable loss accounting framework, also known as the current expected credit loss (CECL) model. CECL requires credit losses expected throughout the life of the asset to be recorded at the time of origination. Under the current incurred loss model, losses are recorded when it is probable that a loss event has occurred. The new standard will require significant operational changes, especially in data collection and analysis. The ASU is effective for interim and annual periods beginning January 1, 2021, and is expected to increase the allowance upon adoption. The Chamber is assessing the standard and is in the process of reviewing the capability of its systems and processes to support the data collection and retention required to implement the new standard.

In May 2014, the FASB issued *ASU No. 2014-09, Revenue from Contracts with Customers*, (*ASU 2014-09*) which requires an entity to recognize the amount of revenue to which it expects to be entitled for the transfer of promised goods or services to customers. This guidance will replace most existing revenue recognition guidance in U.S. GAAP when it becomes effective. The new standard is effective for the Chamber on September 30, 2019. Early application is not permitted. The standard permits the use of either the retrospective or cumulative effect transition method. The Chamber is evaluating the effect that *ASU 2014-09* will have on their combined financial statements.

The FASB issue *ASU 2016-14, Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities*, (*ASU 2016-14*) in August 2016. *ASU 2016-14* improves the current net asset classification requirements and the information presented in the combined financial statements and notes about the Chamber's liquidity, financial performance, and cash flows. The new standard is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2017. The Chamber is currently evaluating the effect that implementation of the new standard will have on their combined financial statements.

## 2. Accounts receivable

Accounts receivable is recorded net of an allowance for expected losses. The allowance is estimated by management based on historical performance and projection trends. Accounts receivable at December 31, consists of the following:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Accounts receivable	\$ 42,265	\$ 42,009
Membership dues receivable	88,818	62,780
City of Branson tourism tax receivable	67,710	91,086
State of Missouri Co-op advertising receivable	-	2,000
Tourism Community Enhancement District receivable	255,706	463,479
Other receivables	-	4,176
	<u>454,499</u>	<u>665,530</u>
Allowance for doubtful accounts	<u>15,000</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	<u>\$ 439,499</u>	<u>\$ 650,530</u>

## 3. Property and equipment, at cost

Property and equipment at December 31, consists of the following:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Land and improvements	\$ 979,560	\$ 452,771
Building and improvements	1,086,923	1,086,923
Office equipment	294,296	294,296
Vehicles	65,504	65,504
Construction in progress	<u>17,045</u>	<u>-</u>
	2,443,328	1,899,494
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>1,121,100</u>	<u>1,064,274</u>
	<u>\$ 1,322,228</u>	<u>\$ 835,220</u>

**4. Tourism tax receipts**

The Chamber is under contract with the City of Branson to provide tourism marketing and promotional services. Under the contract, the City reimburses the Chamber for qualified expenditures equal to 25% of the city's tourism tax collections (less cost of collections and a 2% contingency) up to the amount included in the City's fiscal year budget. During the fiscal year ended December 31, tourism tax revenue is included in the Chamber's combined financial statements as follows:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Marketing support and fees received	\$ 2,144,584	\$ 2,969,104
Accounts receivable	\$ 67,710	\$ 91,086

**5. Community Enhancement District receipts**

The Convention and Visitor's Bureau, a division of the Chamber, is under contract with the Branson/Lakes Area Tourism Community Enhancement District to provide a destination marketing program. Under the contract, the District reimburses the Chamber for qualified expenditures not to exceed the tax collected by the District, less a 2% administrative fee and reasonable reserve determined by the District. During the fiscal year ended December 31, Community Enhancement District revenue is included in the Chamber's combined financial statements as follows:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Marketing support and fees received	\$ 6,936,685	\$ 7,106,479
Accounts receivable	\$ 255,706	\$ 463,479

**6. Leases**

The Chamber leases office space and equipment under non-cancelable operating leases. Future minimum rental payments for each of the next five years ending December 31, are as follows:

2017	\$ 65,112
2018	15,112
2019	5,112
2020	-
2021	-
	<u>\$ 85,336</u>

Rent expense for all operating leases for the year ended December 31, 2016 and 2015 was \$76,373 and \$71,373, respectively.

**7. Employee benefits**

The Chamber participates in the American Chamber of Commerce Executives defined contribution 401(k) savings plan. Eligible employees may make pre-tax contributions from 1% to 15% of eligible compensation. The Chamber contributes up to 5% of eligible compensation for plan participants. Chamber contributions to the plan amounted to \$55,119 in 2016 and \$48,650 in 2015, respectively.

**8. Financial instruments with concentrations of credit risk**

The Chamber maintains cash in bank deposit accounts at various financial institutions. Funds are insured by the FDIC subject to a \$250,000 limitation.

The Chamber invests in a repurchase agreement with Central Bank of Branson that is collateralized by government securities.

**9. Subsequent events**

In preparing these combined financial statements, the Chamber have evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through June 23, 2017, the date the combined financial statements were available to be issued.

**SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES**

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Chamber</i>	<i>Enhancement District Tax CVB</i>	<i>City of Branson Tax CVB</i>	<i>Chamber funded CVB</i>	<i>TCP</i>	<i>Total</i>
Salaries	\$ 367,542	\$ 1,284,352	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 166,073	\$ 1,817,967
Building Operations	-	65,128	-	-	-	65,128
Welcome Center	10,158	-	-	70,307	-	80,465
Office Operations	47,686	142,250	-	-	6,071	196,007
Professional Expenses	18,535	64,816	-	-	4,406	87,757
Association Dues (Non-Marketing)	6,192	2,011	-	-	10,941	19,144
Marketing	-	5,838,844	2,144,584	11,102	13,120	8,007,650
Website	-	160,480	-	-	1,322	161,802
Consumer Response Operations	-	147,078	-	-	-	147,078
Publications	-	313,191	-	-	-	313,191
Legislative	38,152	-	-	-	-	38,152
Member Programs	137,292	-	-	-	36,824	174,116
Business Community Relations	5,138	4,047	-	-	3,983	13,168
Education/Training	1,832	10,314	-	-	1,893	14,039
Mtg/Conferences/Travel	17,108	38,669	-	-	17,442	73,219
Miscellaneous	11,602	133,753	-	-	640	145,995
Depreciation/Bad Debt	85,948	-	-	-	-	85,948
Contingencies/City Contingencies	-	14,637	-	-	622	15,259
Opportunity Fund and Event Support	-	51,154	-	-	-	51,154
Programs/Events	71,142	-	-	-	8,124	79,266
	<u>\$ 818,327</u>	<u>\$ 8,270,724</u>	<u>\$ 2,144,584</u>	<u>\$ 81,409</u>	<u>\$ 271,461</u>	<u>\$ 11,586,505</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**  
**COMBINED SCHEDULE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND MARKETING EXPENSES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Enhancement District Tax CVB</i>	<i>City of Branson Tax CVB</i>
<b>Administrative</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 1,284,352	\$ -
Building Operations	65,128	-
Office Operations	142,250	-
Professional Expenses	64,816	-
Association Dues (Non-Marketing)	2,011	-
Business Community Relations	4,047	-
Education/Training	10,314	-
Mtg/Conferences/Travel	38,669	-
Contingencies/City Contingencies	14,637	-
Miscellaneous	133,753	-
Total Administrative	<u>1,759,977</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Marketing</b>		
Subtotal Marketing	5,838,844	2,144,584
Website	160,480	-
Opportunity Fund and Event Support	51,154	-
Consumer Response Operations	147,078	-
Publications	313,191	-
Total Marketing	<u>6,510,747</u>	<u>2,144,584</u>
	<u>\$ 8,270,724</u>	<u>\$ 2,144,584</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED SCHEDULE OF MARKETING EXPENSES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Enhancement District Tax CVB</i>	<i>City of Branson Tax CVB</i>
Media	\$ 4,130,884	\$ -
Website	160,480	
Public Relations	502,423	-
Travel Trade Show	214,945	-
Trade Media Advertising	213,666	-
Association Dues/Sponsorships	498,200	-
Pub/Collateral	32,164	-
Fulfillment	44,766	-
Consumer Response Operations	147,078	-
Research	201,796	-
Opportunity Fund and Event Support	51,154	-
Publications	<u>313,191</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Enhancement District Tax Marketing</b>	6,510,747	-
City of Branson tourism tax	<u>-</u>	<u>2,144,584</u>
Total Marketing	<u>\$ 6,510,747</u>	<u>\$ 2,144,584</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Chamber</i>	<i>Enhancement District Tax CVB</i>	<i>City of Branson Tax CVB</i>	<i>Chamber funded CVB</i>	<i>TCP</i>	<i>Total</i>
Salaries	\$ 357,832	\$ 1,265,452	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 153,507	\$ 1,776,791
Building Operations	-	69,756	-	-	2,787	72,543
Welcome Center	9,526	-	-	70,250	-	79,776
Office Operations	34,853	131,370	-	-	6,309	172,532
Professional Expenses	34,336	58,318	-	-	8,512	101,166
Association Dues (Non-Marketing)	4,117	302	-	-	12,111	16,530
Marketing	-	5,884,395	2,969,104	50,546	1,000	8,905,045
Website	-	157,149	-	-	408	157,557
Consumer Response Operations	-	140,432	-	-	-	140,432
Publications	-	480,629	-	-	-	480,629
Legislative	28,425	-	-	-	-	28,425
Member Programs	102,807	-	-	-	18,167	120,974
Business Community Relations	8,475	12,645	-	-	6,188	27,308
Education/Training	2,455	9,909	-	-	2,975	15,339
Mtg/Conferences/Travel	7,876	24,448	-	-	21,092	53,416
Miscellaneous	6,056	118,658	-	-	914	125,628
Depreciation/Bad Debt	88,883	-	-	-	-	88,883
Contingencies/City Contingencies	-	-	-	-	503	503
Opportunity Fund and Event Support	-	85,213	-	-	-	85,213
Programs/Events	74,177	-	-	178	10,408	84,763
	<u>\$ 759,818</u>	<u>\$ 8,438,676</u>	<u>\$ 2,969,104</u>	<u>\$ 120,974</u>	<u>\$ 244,881</u>	<u>\$ 12,533,453</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**  
**COMBINED SCHEDULE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND MARKETING EXPENSES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Enhancement District Tax CVB</i>	<i>City of Branson Tax CVB</i>
<b>Administrative</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 1,265,452	\$ -
Building Operations	69,756	-
Office Operations	131,370	-
Professional Expenses	58,318	-
Association Dues (Non-Marketing)	302	-
Business Community Relations	12,645	-
Education/Training	9,909	-
Mtg/Conferences/Travel	24,448	-
Miscellaneous	118,658	-
Total Administrative	<u>1,690,858</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Marketing</b>		
Subtotal Marketing	5,884,395	2,969,104
Website	157,149	-
Opportunity Fund and Event Support	85,213	-
Consumer Response Operations	140,432	-
Publications	480,629	-
Total Marketing	<u>6,747,818</u>	<u>2,969,104</u>
	<u>\$ 8,438,676</u>	<u>\$ 2,969,104</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINED SCHEDULE OF MARKETING EXPENSES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015**

<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Enhancement District Tax CVB</i>	<i>City of Branson Tax CVB</i>
Media	\$ 4,109,308	\$ -
Website	157,149	-
Public Relations	534,003	-
Travel Trade Show	179,417	-
Trade Media Advertising	276,565	-
Association Dues/Sponsorships	533,345	-
Pub/Collateral	36,428	-
Fulfillment	29,683	-
Consumer Response Operations	140,432	-
Research	185,646	-
Opportunity Fund and Event Support	85,213	-
Publications	<u>480,629</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Enhancement District Tax Marketing</b>	6,747,818	-
City of Branson tourism tax	<u>-</u>	<u>2,969,104</u>
Total Marketing	<u>\$ 6,747,818</u>	<u>\$ 2,969,104</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**COMBINING FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINING STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

**DECEMBER 31, 2016**

ASSETS

	<u>Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce</u>	<u>Explore Branson Tourism</u>	<u>Eliminations and Adjustments</u>	<u>Combined</u>
<b>Current assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,713,040	\$ 4,506	\$ -	\$ 1,717,546
Accounts receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$15,000	183,793	255,706	-	439,499
Certificates of deposit	139,249	-	-	139,249
Prepaid expense	22,740	-	-	22,740
	<u>2,058,822</u>	<u>260,212</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,319,034</u>
<b>Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciaiton</b>	1,322,228	-	-	1,322,228
<b>Non-current assets</b>				
Other	92,434	-	(88,979)	3,455
	<u>92,434</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(88,979)</u>	<u>3,455</u>
	<u>\$ 3,473,484</u>	<u>\$ 260,212</u>	<u>\$ (88,979)</u>	<u>\$ 3,644,717</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Accounts payable	\$ 150,260	\$ 161,128	\$ -	\$ 311,388
Accrued payroll	90,565	-	-	90,565
Deferred revenue	569,927	-	-	569,927
Other accrued expenses	-	-	-	-
	<u>810,752</u>	<u>161,128</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>971,880</u>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>				
Due to affiliate	-	88,979	(88,979)	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>88,979</u>	<u>(88,979)</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Net assets</b>				
Unrestricted	1,926,825	10,105	-	1,936,930
Board designated reserve	610,907	-	-	610,907
Board designated airport risk mitigation	125,000	-	-	125,000
	<u>2,662,732</u>	<u>10,105</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,672,837</u>
	<u>\$ 3,473,484</u>	<u>\$ 260,212</u>	<u>\$ (88,979)</u>	<u>\$ 3,644,717</u>

See independent auditor's report.

**BRANSON/LAKES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND AFFILIATE**

**COMBINING STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

	<u>Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce</u>	<u>Explore Branson Tourism</u>	<u>Eliminations and Adjustments</u>	<u>Combined</u>
<b>Support and revenues</b>				
Chamber dues and fees	\$ 874,656	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 874,656
Tax funded CVB	9,805,136	1,056,556	(292,801)	10,568,891
Chamber funded CVB	35,182	-	-	35,182
Taney County Partnership	267,201	-	-	267,201
Interest income	2,737	-	-	2,737
	<u>10,984,912</u>	<u>1,056,556</u>	<u>(292,801)</u>	<u>11,748,667</u>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Program services and supporting activities:				
Chamber	818,327	-	-	818,327
Tax funded CVB	9,661,658	1,046,451	(292,801)	10,415,308
Chamber funded CVB	81,409	-	-	81,409
Taney County Partnership	271,461	-	-	271,461
	<u>10,832,855</u>	<u>1,046,451</u>	<u>(292,801)</u>	<u>11,586,505</u>
<b>Increase in net assets</b>	152,057	10,105	-	162,162
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>2,510,675</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,510,675</u>
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$ 2,662,732</u>	<u>\$ 10,105</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,672,837</u>

See independent auditor's report.



## **2016 MARKETING PLAN**

**January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016**

**[WORK IN PROGRESS -- V. 9-7-15]**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau markets the Branson/Lakes Area, positioning Branson as a family-focused, wholesome tourist destination. While constantly evolving, the 2016 Marketing Plan represents the strategic direction of the CVB. The CVB seeks professional and community input and monitors and responds to changing media, economic, and tourism trends throughout the execution of this plan.

As directed by the CVB's contracts with the City of Branson and the Tourism Community Enhancement District (TCED), the CVB is required to market and promote Branson as a tourist destination through strategies and tactics which produce measurable success for the City and District as a whole.

The 2016 Marketing Plan reflects insights garnered through the 2014 Strategic Marketing and Research, Inc. Brand Research Study as well as other research-based resources.

This plan encompasses key program areas of the Branson CVB, and provides actionable tactics designed to deliver the highest level of success. The process behind its creation includes the review of recent, Branson-specific research, national and regional trends analysis, and the input and advice of the District Marketing Council.

While the Branson/Lakes Area has begun to diversify its business base, tourism is, and for the foreseeable future will continue to be, the economic driver for the area. Therefore, this plan is developed for and centered on tourism marketing, and will evolve as changes in that discipline dictate new courses of action.

The 2016 Marketing Plan will act as a roadmap for the Branson CVB, guiding the decisions and direction of the organization. This plan provides a clear path for the staff and constituents of the CVB in order to make the most effective and efficient choices in marketing Branson as a unique, best-in-class, nationally recognized tourist destination.

## **2016 TRAVEL OUTLOOK FOR U.S. & BRANSON**

In 2015 travel continued growing both nationwide and in Branson, but interestingly growth in visitation has outperformed revenue growth.

Nationwide, domestic leisure trips are forecast to grow by 2.0% in 2015 with person-trips swelling to nearly 1.7 billion. Business travel is also expected to increase growing 1.8% from 450 million last year to 458 in 2015. Overall, however, while nationwide person-trips are expected to increase by 2.0%, total domestic travel expenditures are only expected to increase by 1.4%. This is because travel prices are projected to decrease 1.5% in 2015<sup>i</sup>.

Branson's situation is fairly similar in that visitation has been increasing at a rate faster than visitor spending. Year-to-date through June 2015, Branson's estimated visitation was up 5.4%<sup>ii</sup>. But, STR's projection of overnight hotel/motel room demand (+8.0%<sup>iii</sup>) generated a much stronger performance than the Tourism Community Enhancement District Tax revenues (+0.2%), Branson's 1% City Sales Tax revenues (+2.6%) and Branson's overall tourism tax revenues (+3.8%)<sup>iv</sup>. And, this was consistent with the Branson CVB's intercept research which showed that self-reported visitor spending was down 5.7% per party<sup>v</sup>. It is estimated that Branson's visitation will increase 3.0% in 2015 while overall spending in the area will grow by only about 1.7%<sup>vi</sup>.

According to the U.S. Travel Association and their partners at the Department of Labor and Bureau of Economic Analysis, leisure travel person-trips are forecast to increase by another 1.8% in 2016 while business travel is expected to increase by 1.5%. Combined total domestic travel expenditures are expected to increase by 1.8% in 2016 on the strength of a 3.7% increase that is expected in travel prices next year. Hence, leisure travel is expected to continue growing, but the rate of that growth is expected to continue to slow<sup>vii</sup>.

Once again, a similar path is expected for Branson. Branson has enjoyed comparatively strong growth since 2012. In 2014 visitation increased 7.4% and 2015 is expected to deliver another increase of at least 2.4%. However, there are a variety of micro and macro-economic issues likely to conspire to make it more difficult for Branson to generate as strong of growth in 2016<sup>viii</sup>. On a micro-economic level, most of the pent up demand that had built up since 2010 has burnt off over the past three years and meanwhile the Branson market has added few new shows or attractions of the caliber necessary to move the demand curve.

At a macro-economic level, U.S. economic growth is likely to stagnate thanks to a number of uncertainties, e.g. presidential election year, economic issues in Europe, lowering of Chinese economic forecasts, etc. Given that many Branson visitors are retired, any volatility in the stock market is likely to keep retired travelers close to home. Additionally, it is unlikely that travelers with incomes below \$60k will resume traveling any time soon. Hence, like the nationwide forecast, we see Branson's growth slowing in 2016. Assuming there are no major economic surprises beyond the norm, projections from H2R Market Research are that Branson's visitation will post a 1.3% increase in 2016 with revenues increasing by 2.4%<sup>ix</sup>.

## **MEASURING RESULTS**

The CVB marketing programs are research-driven. Research provides data to substantiate important trends within our region and industry and serves as a valuable tool in decision-making. Research provides facts on a market-wide basis, rather than individual perspective.

Five measurements are used to monitor the success of Branson marketing efforts:

1. **Tax Revenues:** Tourism Tax and Sales Tax revenues from the City of Branson, Taney and Stone counties, and the Tourism Community Enhancement District provide a standard to measure the success of our district businesses and give an objective basis of comparison for measuring our ultimate success in growing Branson's economic strength.
2. **Smith Travel Research:** This national research organization provides a monthly measurement based on hotel/motel occupancy which can be used to compare month and year-to-date, identify trends, and also compare Branson to other destinations (e.g., Pigeon Forge, Myrtle Beach, etc.).
3. **Responses to Advertising:** This measurement utilizes website visitor sessions and, to a lesser extent, 800 number phone call volume as a basis of comparison of response to media advertising.
4. **Ad Effectiveness Study:** This annual study measures the awareness of our advertising and public relations efforts and their effect on intent to travel.
5. **Visitor Profile:** Direct in-market intercept surveys measure attendance by market via zip code comparison. When compared with our advertising expenditures, it gives us a valuable comparison of attendance in advertised versus non-advertised markets, and a basis for measuring advertising success.

### **MARKETING APPROACH**

Branson has a loyal and committed group of guests who know and love the Branson experience and visit frequently. However, focusing our marketing on this group alone would eventually yield diminishing returns and does not provide the basis for sustained and significant growth.

The key to long-term growth is diversifying the audience base we invite to Branson, while maintaining strong relationships with returning customers.

### **KEY APPEALS**

- Friends and family can celebrate each other in a wholesome and authentic environment.
- Branson celebrates American values.
- Branson is a unique entertainment destination offering a variety of live shows.
- Branson offers a quality vacation experience for a reasonable price.
- Branson is surrounded by three spectacular lakes and exciting outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Branson is located within a day's drive of one-third of the country's population.
- Branson is home to a world-class theme park- Silver Dollar City.

The plan proposed herein provides an integrated, comprehensive marketing and communications approach, leveraging Branson’s key appeals to drive increased visitation and improve overall perception of our brand.

**Goal A:**

*Position Branson as the top choice in consumer consideration set for wholesome vacations.*

**Objectives:**

1. Generate an advertising ROI that outperforms industry norms for CVBs with similarly sized budgets.
2. Increase “intent to visit” across all tiers, focusing specifically on Tier 1 and Tier 2.
3. Increase Advertising Awareness across paid and earned media channels.

**Tactics:**

1. **Launch creative featuring new brand identity.**

In 2014 the Branson CVB began an effort to define a new brand identity that would provide direction for the position of the destination. During the process, the position that resonated most with consumers, included the following attributes:

- a. Family - Branson offers a variety of activities that appeal to everyone in the family.
- b. Reconnection – Branson is a place where you can “get away” from every day activities/technology, and focus on what’s truly important.
- c. Freedom – Free to do as much or as little as you want – it’s YOUR vacation.

In 2015, in partnership with Strategic Marketing and Research Insights (SMARI), the CVB conducted qualitative research to arrive at a logo design. Creative concepts, an extension of the brand repositioning, were tested next, to provide direction for the 2016 advertising campaign.

The more “thoughtful” or “emotional” concepts rose to the top as consumers’ favorites. Blending emotion and energy, these concepts provide an umbrella for the reintroduction of Branson to American travelers.

“Be Together” was the chosen concept that will be used in all marketing messaging. This concept scored highest on influencing interest in visiting Branson and likelihood to seek more information on the destination. It also evoked the highest ratings for presenting Branson as welcoming, wholesome, beautiful and charming.

The creative campaign will feature three distinct activity genres: Live Shows, Outdoor Recreation, and Family Fun.

The creative will be strategically delivered to each target market based on research that helps define which markets are most receptive to which specific activity message.

Special consideration will be given to the creative messaging used in Core markets, to combat the “been there, done that” attitude of this audience.

## 2. Employ media strategies maximizing effectiveness and relevance to current markets and targets.

Camelot will place TV and print, and Madden Media and Miles Partnership will place digital media. The CVB will collaborate with all media partners, and consolidate media buying where appropriate to build maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

The advertising plan is designed to enhance consumer perception of Branson, keep Branson top-of-mind as a destination in priority markets, and drive our target audience to ExploreBranson.com.

Research results show that advertising in multiple mediums is critical to achieve maximum effectiveness. A blend of the following advertising elements will be used to promote Branson:

- Television
- Magazines
- Radio
- Online Banner ads
- Search Text ads
- Online video advertising
- Social Media advertising (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Content Distribution

Target Audience: Traditional media will be extended across two main target audiences: Women 25-54 and Women 35-64.

We will focus strong advertising support in priority markets, with special consideration given to rebuilding Core and Primary market awareness. Media will also be directed to Dallas, where in-roads have been made in recent years through increased paid and earned media efforts. National cable will be used, in an effort to extend our reach.

Market segments include:

- **Core** (0-100 miles) Focused primarily in Joplin and Springfield
- **Primary** (101-300 miles) Regional drive markets– Kansas City, St. Louis, Little Rock, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Ft. Smith, Paducah, Topeka and Wichita
- **Outer** (301-650 miles) – Dallas
- **National** (650+ miles)

We will concentrate scheduled media during peak travel planning times, with the heaviest activity in the spring and summer.

### 3. Identify cost saving opportunities that will allow for heavier market saturation.

The CVB and our media partners will leverage Branson at every media level possible through a cooperative media exchange, resulting in added efficiencies and synergy between the CVB and those partners placing significant paid media.

Industry partner media activity will be compiled with CVB media plans to formulate one comprehensive flowchart showcasing the efforts of partners on behalf of Branson. Looking at the big picture makes us aware of the efforts made by partners to avoid oversaturation in a market and competition between the CVB message and the message of Branson's tourism industry. When opportunities for enhancement are found, revisions to existing plans may be made.

#### **Goal B:**

*Improve consumer perception of Branson.*

#### **Objectives:**

1. Establish brand identity metrics that can be monitored annually. (Specific goal to be included post Ad Effectiveness study).
2. Activate refreshed brand identity across all Branson CVB touchpoints, both local and consumer-facing.
3. Maintain Net Promoter Score of at least 55%.

#### **Tactics:**

1. Collaborate with research partners to determine the most effective measurements for Explore Branson's brand health.

Substantial resources have been invested in re-positioning Branson's destination brand in order to elevate our current position to appeal to a broader audience. In 2016 the CVB will work with existing research partners, in addition to evaluating standard and customary destination brand measurement, to determine measurable benchmarks illustrating growth of the brand.

2. Redesign internal and external creative brand marks to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Beginning in 2015 and throughout 2016, all Explore Branson touchpoints will be redesigned to feature the new brand identity. Both internal (within the CVB and Branson community), and external (consumer-facing) opportunities will be identified and refreshed.

3. Continue growing and improving library of professional photo and video assets.

Branson's photo and video assets are one of the most critical components to success in re-positioning Explore Branson's brand. Consumers rely heavily on visual cues to persuade them to visit a destination. The CVB will continue investing in high quality, professional photography that can be used throughout our marketing messages both online and offline.

**Goal C:**

*Grow Branson's position as a multi-season vacation destination.*

**Objectives:**

1. Enhance shoulder season opportunities and extend the invitation further.
2. Leverage special events and limited engagements to drive visitation from inactives.

**Tactics:**

1. Reallocate media investment as recommended by media partners, to focus additional dollars on a concentrated spring marketing effort.

In order to further grow the opportunity to capture spring break travelers (including families and multigenerational travel parties); the CVB will appropriate funds to February, March and April to make a sizable impact on the awareness of Branson as a spring-time destination.

2. Promote Branson as a fall getaway destination.

Run fall-themed creative messaging across all mediums to promote the scenic Ozark Mountains during this time of year. This season will be supported with paid media in the Core and Primary markets.

3. Promote Ozark Mountain Christmas as a robust holiday season featuring live shows and special events that can only be found in Branson.

Utilize Christmas-themed TV creative to specifically target Core and Primary markets, driving seasonal visitation during November and December. Promote Christmas events and Christmas shows and performances as advertising and public relations hooks.

**Goal D:**

*Enhance the effectiveness of and generate demand for Branson CVB's owned media channels.*

**Objectives:**

1. Produce high quality publications to fulfill consumer and business needs.
2. Employ necessary updates and changes to ExploreBranson.com to align our website with traveler needs and expectations.

**Tactics:**

1. Explore opportunities to further enhance the Branson Vacation Guide.

The Branson CVB produces several publications throughout the year, providing requested and necessary information to consumers and trade partners. These publications allow the CVB to collate the vast amount of data and travel options available to individuals and groups seeking trip planning assistance.

The annual Vacation Guide offers industry partners the opportunity to advertise their product to potential customers. It is the primary fulfillment piece through our inquiry fulfillment program. It is also used as a fulfillment piece at special events, trade shows, and in the Chamber of Commerce/CVB information center.

The CVB will continue evaluating the effectiveness of the Vacation Guide, seeking opportunities to enhance the publication in areas of editorial and trip ideas. Various production and publishing scenarios will be explored, to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency in creating and delivering the guide.

2. Produce niche collateral material as needed.

In addition to the Vacation Guide, the CVB will produce several niche publications to deliver to various audiences who frequently request information above and beyond that which is provided in the Vacation Guide. These publications may include:

1. Bi-Annual Meeting Planner Guide
2. Group Tour & Reunion Planner
3. Travel Agent Commission Guide
4. Student Travel Planning Guide
5. Veterans Week brochure

## **B. COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Branson continues to be the recipient of a remarkable amount of media coverage for a town of 10,000 in the Ozarks. In 2015 more than 300 media members from a variety of press, radio, TV and social media outlets were invited by the CVB and given additional insight into our Midwest vacation destination.

In 3rd quarter 2015, the CVB is on track to approach an annual ad equivalency of \$15MM (YTD thru JULY is \$11MM) vs. \$14.4MM ad equivalency total for 2014.

Highlights of 2015 media coverage include: accolades from TripAdvisor and Trivago; Bass Pro Legends of Golf PGA event; Spring and Christmas Geiger & Assoc. FAM tours; Society of American Travel Writers Western Chapter conference meeting in Branson; The Weather Channel's AMHQ, with Sam Champion and Jim Cantore; and Branson entertainers making TV/radio appearances in Kansas City, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Dallas/Ft. Worth and St. Louis.

The "freedom to enjoy life's simple pleasures" that makes the Branson/Lakes Area an award-winning destination endures—along with the three pillars of live entertainment, outdoor adventure and family fun—and today our community welcomes many positive changes. So, in 2016 and beyond, public relations efforts must again be aggressive to spread the word. We will promote an accurate and complete picture of what Branson has become in a way that will capture the attention of the media and consumers. We will give them compelling reasons to take a closer look at Branson and see it for what it really is: a great vacation destination and a real value.

The following goals and objectives are designed to reach the widest variety of target audiences and to provide cost-effective, third-party, credible promotion of the area. This public relations effort includes tactics used to generate awareness among the various audiences.

### **Goal A:**

*Generate positive coverage of the Branson/Lakes Area in regional and national media outlets.*

### **Objective:**

1. Generate \$16 million in ad equivalency as evaluated by national monitoring services (Vocus/Cision and TrendKite), representing a 40:1 ROI.

### **Tactics:**

1. Generate feature stories in newspapers, magazines, online and in other media across the country using Geiger & Assoc. FAM tours in spring and Christmas and focused, niche individual FAMS.

2. Generate positive radio and TV coverage, both nationally and regionally working with Mega Media, whose network of media contacts enables first-hand access to story placement in the southwest U.S. and major media outlets in New York City, Los Angeles, Dallas and Chicago. Additionally, staff utilizes added value offerings from media buys through Camelot Communications.
3. Continue improving and expanding our brand image by hosting the 40th Annual Mid-America Emmy Awards in Branson in October 2016.
4. Host A-list journalists through work with PR Committee, Geiger & Associates, Mega Media, Buffalo Invigoration Group (BIG) and others.
5. Host Spring and Christmas FAM tours for staff writers from Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc. (CNHI) newspapers.
6. Maximize coverage from members of the Missouri Press Association, Texas Press Association, and Arkansas Press Association by attending and sponsoring association functions.
7. Continue working with NW Arkansas/SW Missouri destinations for a complete Ozarks tour de force (Eureka Springs, Bentonville and Springfield) to bring in topnotch journalists for the overall “Only in the Ozarks” story.

**Goal B:**

*Recruit professional travel writers and outdoor journalists’ conferences to Branson.*

**Objective:**

1. Offer a compelling reason for journalists who have never been to Branson to come and experience the Branson/Lakes Area.

**Tactics:**

1. Begin a new relationship with North American Travel Journalists Assoc. (NATJA) by attending their annual conference in Oxnard, CA.
2. Invite other chapters of Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) to hold annual conferences in Branson, i.e., editors or freelance national chapters.
3. Bid on upcoming conferences to host Outdoor Writers Association of America and Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers, with their members’ support.
4. Plan excellent offerings for continuing education seminars to further entice selection committees.
5. Maximize the value of first-hand experience by bringing editorial decision-makers and photographers to Branson for professional development offerings in conjunction with these conferences.
6. Capitalize on media interest in Bass Pro holdings, including PGA golf and Outdoor Academy, pristine lakes, nationally recognized entertainers, award-winning family attractions and more in order to promote the plethora of outdoor/travel stories in the Branson/Lakes Area.

### **C. DIGITAL MARKETING**

The CVB develops, operates and markets Branson’s official digital channels, including ExploreBranson.com, and manages active communities on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.

In a manner consistent with industry best practices, the CVB uses in-house resources and outside consultants to create unique and compelling content for these channels. In addition, the CVB and its vendor experts take advantage of site optimization, inbound links, content and social promotion to maximize our investment in digital channels and reach as many potential visitors as possible at every step of the conversion funnel.

The CVB reaches consumers through year-round paid advertising that coincides with offline advertising, and also takes advantage of opportunities unique to digital media. In many instances, these ads are geographically, demographically and behaviorally targeted and include rich-media display advertising, search engine marketing, contextual content distribution, retargeting and lead generation.

This comprehensive digital approach includes organic and paid components that speak to consumers at each of the following steps of the travel-planning process:

1. Branding/Awareness
2. Consideration/Inspiration
3. Planning
4. Booking
5. Follow-up and Loyalty

#### **Goal A:**

*Use digital media to inspire, inform and convert Branson visitors.*

#### **Objectives:**

1. Refine and improve the user experience on ExploreBranson.com by performing usability test in Q1.
2. Increase page views on articles on ExploreBranson.com by 5%.
3. Optimize and maximize our investment of time and resources in social channels by analyzing engagement and reach.
4. Increase newsletter open rate to the industry standard of 18%.
5. Increase vacation guide requests on website by 10%.
6. Foster relationships with social influencers to increase awareness/consideration of Branson as a vacation destination.

7. Implement a more robust digital marketing dashboard that coordinates and integrates advertising across all digital media, including desktop, mobile and social channels.
8. Provide ongoing customer service and engagement through digital channels.

**Tactics:**

1. After consumer website testing is complete in Q1 work with website vendor to implement suggested changes and add new features.
2. Continue working with staff and outside resources to identify and create 50 pieces compelling content, including articles, videos and photos, to be used across all digital channels.
3. Invest in an iPad with more memory, microphones, lighting equipment, tripod and memory cards, to create more video content.
4. Invest in relationships with high value social media influencers and invite at least two on Branson FAM trips tailored family and outdoor niches.
5. Work with digital marketing agencies to make sure campaigns are structured foster website goal completions, including vacation guide requests and newsletter signups.
6. Coordinate the efforts of the CVB's digital marketing and social agencies to better maximize the effectiveness of paid advertising and content creation efforts by having quarterly conference calls with all vendors and sharing unified monthly reports.
7. After reviewing the finding of the Social Conversion Study completed in late 2015, implement changes gleaned from the findings to improve the CVB's reporting on social media efforts.
8. Continue investing in analytics, research and training for the fast-evolving social media marketplace, including webinars and conferences.
9. Investigate and implement unified data dashboard for use by CVB staff and vendors.
10. Continue building upon the vibrant and active social media communities already created, working to expand and further engage these audiences.
11. Continue refining the CVB strategy for staff to respond to online questions, tweets and other direct communications with visitors by maintaining and improving on-call schedule.
12. Evaluate new digital opportunities, such as Periscope and implement new channels as is appropriate.
13. Continue existing monthly newsletter campaign and grow the list by 10,000 subscribers.
14. Conduct a reengagement newsletter campaign that seeks to activate the unengaged portion of our list.
15. Implement four new niche newsletters in addition to the monthly schedule.

**Goal B:**

*Educate and empower community partners to better communicate and market via digital channels.*

**Objective:**

1. Increase number of businesses controlling their data on ExploreBranson.com by 10%.

**Tactics:**

1. Create a FAQ document, at least one how to video and one seminar for partner businesses about the features of ExploreBranson.com and the business data-management tool.
2. Conduct Web & Social Media Summit in 2016 for local businesses, including sessions and speakers on social media, websites and paid advertising.
3. Continue promoting the iConnect Portal as the official channel for B2B tourism information for Branson by producing a monthly newsletter for industry partners that drives them back to the portal.

**Goal C:**

*Create touchpoints within Branson that match new brand identity and create a sense of place for visitors, encouraging interaction.*

**Objectives:**

1. Create compelling, sharable visual elements at several locations in town where visitors can photograph themselves and share.
2. Amplify and curate visitor-generated content that interacts with our touchpoints.
3. Involve area businesses in creating touchpoints at their properties.

**Tactics:**

1. Organize the creation of a Branson mural, envisioned to be on the side of a prominent building.
2. Create several photo-sharing spots and artifacts in locations where visitors are likely to already be taking photos.
3. Make #ExploreBranson part of all artifacts.
4. Reshare and repurpose the user-generated content across our web and social channels to tell organic stories.
5. Develop graphic standards and usage guidelines for area businesses to participate or create their own artifacts distributed through the iConnect portal.

**D. LEISURE GROUP TRAVEL**

Branson visitor profile research for group travelers has shown slow but steady growth in the past two years. At the end of 2014 groups were 5.4% of total visitors up from 4.6% the previous year. By May of 2015 groups accounted for 6.07% of visitation. This trend is expected to continue in 2016, spurred by strengthening awareness of Branson as a top-tier student/youth travel destination.

Leisure affinity groups represent many specific niche groups the Branson CVB will market to in 2016. The key targets include faith-based and bank groups, and family and military reunions, representing multi-generational group travel which is a growing trend. Professional travel planners such as tour operators and travel agents continue to be a large part of the group travel market industry and are an effective and proven way to generate group travel business and bookings within a 12 to 24-month cycle.

In 2015 Branson hosted the Student & Youth Travel Association Conference. This event was a major opportunity to activate the new brand to key travel buyers of student group travel. We'll continue an aggressive outbound effort to market to student and youth travel groups in 2016 through performance, educational and leisure activities messaging. Some of our tactics will include the 2016 SYTA sponsorship, social media marketing targeting music educators, an annual music director FAM and second year production and distribution of the official Student Guide.

For the second year in a row Branson will be a major sponsor at the ABA Marketplace and host a Tour Operator Branson Breakfast show. It is scheduled for January 11, 2016 in Louisville, KY. This sponsorship partners the CVB with community stake holders to invest their time, dollars and resources to promote Branson to key industry tour operators. Branson is also hosting the closing dinner event at Travel South Showcase in Winston-Salem, NC on March 8, 2016. This event is the prelude to Branson being selected as the host city for Travel South Showcase sales conference in March 2017. This event has the potential to impact our group business and promises to bring key industry tour operators and travel agents to Branson to experience first-hand the features and benefits to booking Branson travel packages for their clients.

In order for Branson to maintain its strong share of the country's traditional motor coach travel by senior adults we'll continue to have presence through national group travel associations besides the ones mentioned above they'll include NTA and OMCA. Our participation with will comprise of membership, marketplaces and sponsorships.

We will activate the new brand with seamless integration of all available communication in a creative platform to activate group travel to Branson.

**Goal A:**

*Increase the number of leisure groups to Branson.*

**Objectives:**

1. Increase RFI's by 10% over 2015.
2. Increase sale kits distribution by 10% over 2015.
3. Increase the number of RFPs by 10% over 2015.
4. Increase qualified FAM attendees by 10% over 2015.

**Tactics:**

1. Attend industry group travel shows and marketplaces with the goal to maintain current group travel relationships, develop new ones, and generate RFIs, RFPs and qualified FAM attendees to meet our objectives
2. Maintain memberships in leisure group travel associations
3. Target church groups thru market specific direct mail campaign to solicit sales kit requests and RFPs.
4. Target travel agents thru monthly email blasts such as MailPound to solicit sales kit requests
5. Produce three annual FAM tours to promote group travel and target tour operators, music directors and military reunion planners
6. Solicit sales kit requests thru two direct mail post card campaigns; one sent in March and one sent in August
7. Database management and updates of leisure group travel planner
8. Promote Branson group travel to reunions and tour operators through digital marketing – specifically monthly Google Ads. Measure activity quarterly.
9. Promote Branson group travel to music educators and travel agents through Facebook and Twitter to solicit student guide and travel agent commission guide
10. Promote Branson group travel thru meetings, sports and PR
11. Develop and distribute group sales collateral and sales guides
12. Secure travel trade advertisements thru print and web based media sources.

**Goal B:**

*Partner and communicate with hospitality stakeholders to promote group business to Branson.*

**Objectives:**

1. Produce post FAM survey rating of 50% or more of Branson sponsors booked group business as a result of our FAMs
2. Produce post FAM survey rating of 80% or higher of Branson sponsors positive overall satisfaction
3. Meet a minimum of 80% of fund raising goals on sponsorships and special projects through Branson sponsors

**Tactics:**

1. Present the 2016 calendar of events by first quarter

2. Maintain 10 minimum and 15 maximum committee members to attend quarterly committee meetings.
3. Meet with committee chairs and committee members quarterly to review and update on 2016 goals & objectives
4. Develop ask forces as needed for special projects and sponsorships
5. Communicate projects, meeting notes, reports and other information through the CVB industry portal in a timely manner
6. Produce annual FAM tours, sales events and sponsorships.
7. Host student market workshop for community stakeholders.
8. Schedule informational meetings upon request with area businesses to communicate group marketing objectives and goals.

#### **E. MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS**

The Global Business Travel Association projects modest growth for meetings and events in 2016, with an anticipated 2% increase in group size, and an increase of 4.5% in cost per attendee per day.

While supply is up, with almost 100,000 new rooms added in 2015 in North America, demand continues to grow at up to quadruple the rate of supply. Pricing power should remain in the hands of hoteliers until the second half of 2016. Increasing lead time for larger events and strategic meetings management can help mitigate price pressure. Food and beverage pressures continue to be a significant driver for cost, and buyers are managing menus as well as the number of breaks to drive savings.

From the Bridgestreet Global Hospitality Bleisure Report 2014, we find these predictions:

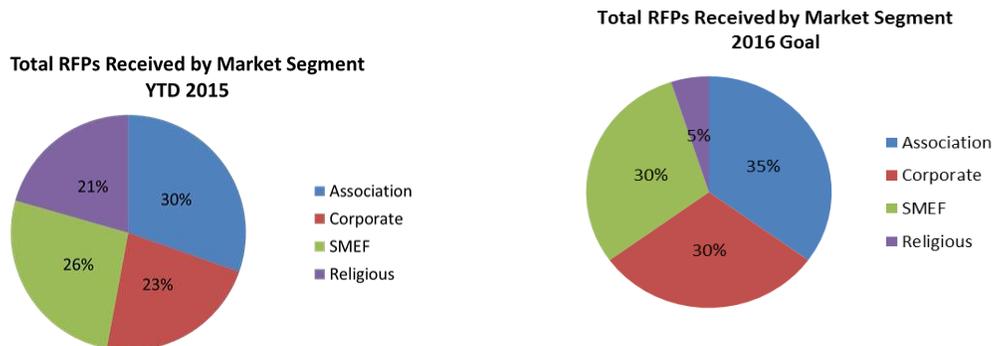
- 94% of younger travelers are 'more than' or 'equally' likely to take a bleisure trip in the next five years – significantly higher than the worldwide average.
- Hotwire.com survey of U.S. travelers found Millennials (18-34) were more likely to mix business with pleasure compared to their older counterparts (aged 35 to 44) at 56% vs. 37%.
- For meetings and conventions, the city itself becomes the venue and quality of place is a potential competitive advantage.

In 2016 the Branson CVB's Meeting & Convention team will continue focusing on the 300-mile radius, targeting corporate and third party planners. We will continue efforts with regional and national associations, where appropriate. Air lift direct to Branson and Springfield-Branson Airport fares continue to be a challenge for many groups. We'll continue exploring new ground transportation options/lower costs for transporting attendees from Springfield to Branson, which remains a booking hurdle for larger,

national groups. More hotel inventory in the downtown area would also increase our chances to attract new convention groups.

We will actively pursue more professional fraternities and sororities, car shows, motorcycle clubs, education and other hobby groups.

The chart on the left below represents the 2015 market segment breakdown for RFPs received. The chart on the right depicts our goal to increase corporate, association and SMEF (Social, Military Meetings, Education, and Fraternal) in 2016.



**Goal A:**

*Increase the number of meetings and conventions in the Branson/Lakes area.*

**Objectives:**

1. Increase the number of qualified RFPs by 5% over 2015.
2. Increase definite room nights by 5% over 2015.
3. Increase awareness within the community about the importance of the meetings & conventions market. Measure meetings booked through the “Meet Me in Branson” campaign.
4. Increase PR exposure with editorial coverage in meeting & convention trade publications and track ad equivalency.
5. Increase web presence, search engine marketing and social media efforts to reach more meeting planners. Track page view traffic, keyword optimization, RFP production on website and Cvent measure social engagement.

**Tactics:**

1. Develop a print and digital advertising plan utilizing findings from the meeting planner survey. Conduct follow-up study in late 2016.
2. Continue developing new business from the “accidental planner” (administrative assistants) utilizing our membership and recent survey conducted with the International Association of Administrative Professionals.
3. Partner with Spinnaker DME, a Chicago-based destination rep firm based in the Chicago area to gain more national association leads in this market.

4. Attend industry tradeshows, marketplaces and hosted buyer events that bring a substantial ROI. Continue our sponsorship at Connect Marketplace, maximizing exposure at this productive conference.
5. Become destination partners with third party planner organizations, Helms Briscoe and Conference Direct and attend one or both of their marketplace events.
6. Continue prospecting from lost business reports, LinkedIn and through industry directories. Implement new prospecting methods to include one hour of uninterrupted closed-door prospecting at the beginning of each day.
7. Increase grass roots sales call efforts to corporate prospects in key regional markets and plan one or two client events in targeted cities.
8. Continue efforts in Arkansas through sponsorship and engagement with the Arkansas Society of Association Executives and with an annual sales event and sales calls in NW Arkansas.
9. Continue efforts in Oklahoma through sponsorship package with Oklahoma Society of Association Executives.
10. Continue current efforts with Missouri Society of Association Executives.
11. Execute targeted direct mail campaigns in 300-mile radius.
12. Continue “Meet Me in Branson” campaign with call to action collateral piece.
13. Plan and conduct the third annual Meetings, Conventions and Sports 101, an educational event for the local community. This training will help Branson partners understand the meetings & conventions market to provide better proposals, resulting in more bookings.
14. Continue working with Geiger & Associates and Buffalo Communications to court travel writers and golf writers who publish articles for meeting & convention trade publications. These writers will be invited to our FAM and the Geiger FAM.
15. Create new content for ExploreBransonMeetings.com, including featured meeting planner blogs and short testimonial videos.
16. Analyze year-end results with Cvent, and optimize advertising package.
17. Continue keyword and retargeting campaigns to drive planners to website and RFP form.
18. Establish a more robust social media content calendar and feature more testimonials, short videos (possibly with Periscope) and continue relationship-building on LinkedIn through industry groups.
19. Produce a FAM that allow planners to experience the fun activities in Branson, along with touring hotels and venues.
20. Continue exploring consumer shows as options for larger, city-wide events.

21. Get involved with the Senior Planners Industry Network (SPIN) to capitalize on opportunities to develop relationships with senior-level planners. Sponsor and attend SpinCon 2016. Continue to network with Shawna Suckow.
22. Plan a focus group/FAM with Shawna Suckow to bring in senior planners to gain feedback and ideas on our destination from a meeting planner perspective.
23. Continue to educate our hotels on how best to capture more meetings business through events and one-on-one training sessions for iDSS, our lead distribution database platform.

#### **F. SPORTS MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT**

It is the goal of the Branson CVB Sports department to drive direct visitor spending and economic development while introducing the next generation to the Branson/Lakes Area through youth and amateur sports.

Despite limited facilities, the Branson/Lakes Area has experienced noteworthy success from the sports travel market. The Branson Parks and Recreation Department alone reported over 13.4 million in direct visitor spending in 2014. The Branson CVB assisted with turning more than 12,000 new room nights definite in 2014.

The Branson CVB is an important resource for identifying and recruiting visitor-heavy events to the facilities currently available in our community. In 2016 we will focus efforts on attracting events that fit current facilities while working with the owners of Ballparks of America, other experts in the industry, and community stakeholders to determine the possibility of additional infrastructure.

We will continue developing volunteer programs (Local Organizing Committees--LOC's) while working with community businesses to actively recruit, retain and grow sporting events, achieving recognition as a preferred market for sports event hosts and travelers.

The Branson CVB Sports team will capitalize on the destination's appeal as a sports and tourism location, promoting its unique qualities through cultivating relationships with sports event planners to build awareness and attract new events and encouraging non-traditional and traditional sports event planners to stage competitions during off-peak travel seasons.

#### **Goal A:**

*Increase the number of sporting events and participation in the Branson/Lakes area.*

#### **Objectives:**

1. Increase the number of qualified RFPs by 5% over 2015.
2. Increase definite room nights by 5% over 2015.
3. Educate community on the economic impact of sports events.

4. Increase participation from community members, event participants and spectators.
5. Provide evaluation and recommendation to CMO regarding future staffing needs for the Sports Marketing and Development department.

**Tactics:**

1. Focus sales efforts on cheer, dance, martial arts and other indoor athletic events that fit local theaters and current facilities.
2. Maintain and build relationships with organizers of soft adventure/outdoor events that can be hosted on the lakes and trails (including Paddle Boarding, Fishing, Open Water Swimming, Triathlons, Ragnar Trails, X-Terra, mud-runs).
3. While the Branson Rec Plex has very limited availability, we will continue supporting their efforts with baseball/softball, basketball and volleyball events in the off-season and assist with growth of event participation and attendance.
4. Work with the Convention Center to add events that can utilize their facilities and new equipment.
5. Sponsor industry events (i.e. NASC, SPORTS Relationship Conference) that provide optimum exposure to Sports Event Organizers.
6. Reinforce sponsorships and tradeshow/marketplace participation with online advertisements through qualified sports travel/organizer advertising mediums.
7. Prospect and build relationships with event organizers from lost business reports, Linked In, past tradeshow/marketplace events and industry directories.
8. Sponsor events that provide national advertising opportunities and increase incremental travel (i.e. PGA, Bass, NAIA, etc.)
9. Inform and share information with the Branson community through the sports committee, ExploreBranson.com/portal and social media.
10. Improve volunteer/LOC programs.
11. Work with professionals to define roles/needs and properly educate LOC members.
12. Create and implement customer site inspections and/or FAM tours.
13. Work closely with Sports Committee Chair and staff to define committee responsibilities.

**Goal B:**

*Grow Branson's position as a year-long, multi-season Sports destination.*

**Objective:**

1. Define a plan for increasing the number of area fields/courts/playing surfaces (indoor or outdoor) in the Branson/Lakes Area by June of 2016 through execution of tactics listed below.

**Tactics:**

1. Invite community leaders to participate in site visits of sports facilities/venues within similar communities.

2. Explore best practices for new facility funding and development in a community.
3. Meet with the Branson Parks and Recreation Department and City of Branson regarding funding opportunities for potential indoor and/or outdoor facilities.
4. Define priorities for future sports facility development.
5. Work with TCP to research and communicate options for new facility development.
6. Meet with industry counterparts to discuss successes and failures.
7. Meet with professionals in the industry to discuss best practices.
8. Host at least one meeting to educate the community on the economic impact of sports events.
9. Review progress towards potential indoor and/or outdoor facilities at the end of 2016.

**Goal C:**

*Increase local and non-local awareness to build participation and spectator attendance at events.*

**Objective:**

1. Boost awareness of locally hosted and sponsored sporting events by running ads through social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, etc. . .) and Press Releases.

**Tactics:**

1. Evaluate mobile marketing applications that link event attendees to local merchants, partners and restaurants.
2. Work with Two Six Digital or other marketing partners to specifically target select audiences.
3. Maintain and provide content for all aspects of ExploreBransonSports.com, social media and other technology-driven marketing initiatives.
4. Work with marketing agency to coordinate and facilitate facility event photo and video shoots for future marketing initiatives.
5. Work with social media/digital marketing department to develop and implement social media plan to determine what will do more to reach out to participation-based sports markets on a personal level.
6. Showcase the variety of attractions, outdoor activities, dining and shopping available to sporting event participants and guests through mediums that directly connect with guests visiting and/or watching these events.
7. Add content by telling stories about the event participants, families and friends when they visit the area.
8. Increase content and sports event information available on ExploreBranson.com and ExploreBransonSports.com for participants and spectators.

**G. COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

As directed by the Chamber/CVB's contract with the City of Branson, the CVB supports the Downtown Branson Mainstreet Association (Historic Downtown), and the Branson Veteran's Task Force through ear-marked funds. These dollars are allocated to funding programs within these organizations which are designed to ensure their success.

---

<sup>i</sup> U.S. Travel Forecast, U.S. Travel Association's Travel Forecast Model, BLS, Department of Labor; OTTI, Department of Commerce, Tourism Economics. 7.20.15

<sup>ii</sup> Branson Convention & Visitor Bureau's Monthly Weighted Performance Model

<sup>iii</sup> STR, City of Branson, June 2015 Report.

<sup>iv</sup> City of Branson and TCED Tax Board

<sup>v</sup> H2R Market Research, estimated June YTD 2015

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid

<sup>vii</sup> U.S. Travel Forecast, U.S. Travel Association's Travel Forecast Model, BLS, Department of Labor; OTTI, Department of Commerce, Tourism Economics. 7.20.15

<sup>viii</sup> Branson Convention & Visitor Bureau's Monthly Weighted Performance Model

<sup>ix</sup> H2R Market Research